

# Article Alert

No. 09, September 2006

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## Information Resource Center

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The books, articles, and web sites described in the Article Alert present a diversity of views in order to keep our IRC users abreast of current issues and concerns in the United States. These items represent the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official U.S. Government policy.

## Colombus Day, Oct. 2006 Online Resources



1492 An Ongoing Voyage -Library of Congress  
<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/1492/about.html>

The Age of Exploration-Mariners' Museum  
<http://www.mariner.org/educationalad/ageofex/columbus.php>

Beyond Columbus: Teaching the Lessons of 1492  
Education World  
[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_curr/curr167.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr167.shtml)

Christopher Columbus-Encarta Encyclopedia  
<http://muweb.millersville.edu/%7Ecolumbus/columbus.html>

Columbus Day-Holiday Zone  
<http://www.geocities.com/holidayzone/columbus/index.html>

Just Where Was Columbus?-InfoPlease.com  
<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/columbus.html>

Other Worlds: The Voyage of Columbus  
Lesson Plan. National Endowment for the Humanities  
[http://edsitement.neh.gov/view\\_lesson\\_plan.asp?id=322](http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=322)

Today in History: Columbus Day-Library of Congress  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/oct12.html>

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## Celebrating Ramadan in America



Young Muslims read a flyer for a Ramadan celebration at an Islamic school in Villa Park, Illinois. In the United States parents have the choice of sending their children to private schools with religious instruction or to public schools in which all faiths are represented. Although schools remain open during the month of Ramadan, accommodations are for Muslim students to practice their faith without restriction. (© AP)

Muslim worshippers, from left, Aminah, Shakera, Naima, Rabiyyah and her 11-year-old daughter Tanzila, have a small meal as they break their fast at the end of the first day of the holy month of



Ramadan at the Islamic Cultural Center of New York, the largest mosque in the city. Recent studies of the ethnic ancestry of Muslims in North America show the rich diversity of Muslim communities across the United States, with immigrants from the Middle East, South Asia, Africa, Iran, the Balkans, and Turkey. (© AP Images)

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## Free New Online Publications

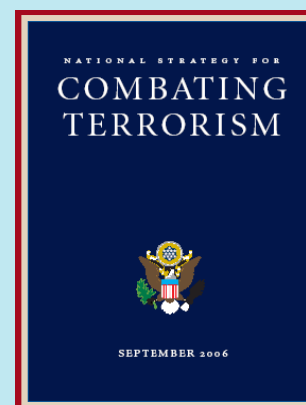
### Rebuilding and Resilience Five Years After 9/11 E-Journal, September 2006



This journal examines how the United States has rebounded and how the international community has rebuilt and come together to condemn terrorism in the five years since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Highlights include articles about the rebuilding of the area around the World Trade Center, U.S. government efforts to facilitate travel to the United States, an interfaith roundtable, planned 9/11 memorials, and how survivors are rebuilding their lives.

To download the full text of the report (in pdf), please visit:  
<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/0806/ijpe/ijpe0806.pdf>

### National Strategy for Combating Terrorism September 2006



President Bush released his updated National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (NSCT), which outlines the United States government strategy to protect and defend American interests at home and abroad from terrorism.

To download the full text of the report (in pdf), please visit:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nsct/2006/nsct2006.pdf>

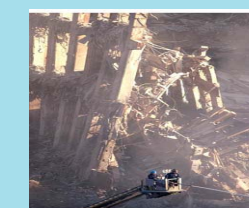
### State Magazine Online September 2006



News and information about U.S. Department of State

To download the full text of the report (in pdf), please visit:  
<http://www.state.gov/>

## FIVE YEARS AFTER 9/11



DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. Kumar, Krishna INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE INDEPENDENT MEDIA IN TRANSITION AND POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES (Democratization, Vol. 13, No. 4, August 2006, pp. 652-667)

Recently, governments and NGOs have developed media assistance programs in transitional countries, assisting media with journalist and management training, financial backing, legal reform and institutional development. Kumar concludes that the programs have strengthened and expanded independent media outlets. Journalistic standards have improved vastly, while financial sustainability remains a struggle. Kumar concludes that governments should only assist media outlets that can sustain themselves without foreign support. He also argues that programs must be separate from public diplomacy efforts. If citizens or governments sense that foreign bodies are pushing ideology in the emerging media, the programs will backfire and the public will distrust the new media outlets. However, when public diplomacy and independent media coexist, both benefit, with new outlets creating a space for public diplomacy and diplomats generating content for journalists.

2. Perlman, Ellen COMPUTER MELTDOWN (Governing, August 2006, pp. 36-40)

In Gilpin County, Colorado, a major new computer system was scheduled to be installed to streamline the distribution of food stamps, Medicaid and other benefits for low-income households. Without heeding the advice of county workers, the state switched on the system without working out the problems and glitches in the system. Perlman notes that the lack of a capable system administrator brought on a disaster. A former state legislator was placed in charge of fixing the system, and the county's backlog has come down significantly. Gilpin County's high-cost IT investment came with many lessons to be learned by other local governments.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

3. Kotlikoff, Laurence J. IS THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPT? (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review, vol. 88, no. 4, July/August 2006, pp. 235-249)

The author, professor of economics at Boston University, points out that the U.S. has never defaulted on its debt, and its debt-to-GDP ratio is substantially lower than that of Japan or other developed Western democracies. However, he notes that analysis suggests that the U.S. "is, indeed, bankrupt, insofar as it will be unable to pay its creditors, who, in this context, are current and future generations to whom it has explicitly or implicitly promised future net payments of various kinds". In an article combining complex mathematical equations and readable layman's language, Kotlikoff expounds on the total U.S. fiscal gap, citing a U.S Treasury Department-sponsored study in 2002 that calculated the total U.S. debt at an eye-popping USD 65.9 trillion -- an amount five times the total U.S. GDP, and twice the size of national wealth. He notes that, in a few years, the 77 million "baby boomers", ages 41-59, will start collecting Social Security and health-care benefits from the next generation, an "onslaught of

obligation" that the country has done little to prepare for. Apart from draconian tax increases and benefit cuts, Kotlikoff proposes to allow direct Chinese investment in the U.S. economy with their massive dollar reserves, and a radical overhaul of U.S. financial institutions -- a national retail sales tax, personalized Social Security accounts, and a budgeted universal health-care system.

4. Roach, Stephen S. PANDER-NOMICS (The National Interest, issue 83, Summer 2006, pp. 92-95)

Roach, chief economist for Morgan Stanley, says the election year political gains of catering to anti-trade constituencies runs counter to the macroeconomic needs of a domestic savings deficient U.S. economy. He discusses some protectionist legislation currently in Congress and notes that it would not fix the trade deficit problem, but it would discourage the trade and investment that allows the U.S. economy to grow despite the savings deficit. Roach is also disconcerted by the legislative tactic of transforming China into the "competitive enemy" or characterizing the United Arab Emirates (owner of Dubai Ports World) as a national security threat. These tactics inject distrust into the U.S.'s relationships with the international community, he laments, including some of its most important strategic relationships. As the political "fix" for the gaping U.S. trade deficit is increasingly at odds with the macroeconomic fix, the odds of a disruptive outcome for the U.S. and global economy are high and rising, concludes Roach.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

5. Miller, Nicholas J. NATIONALISM AND POLICYMAKING IN THE BALKANS (Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer/Fall 2006, pp. 15-19)

With the March 2006 death of Slobodan Milosevic and the launch of the Kosovo status negotiations, attention has once again been drawn to the Balkan nationalism of the 1990s. Asks the author, "were the tragedies of the Balkan conflict the malevolent work of evil politicians or a logical and continuous - perhaps even inevitable - product of culture? Was Balkan nationalism ancient and organic or modern and manipulated?" The importance of this distinction for policymakers is that the "ancient" view argues against intervention in such circumstances while the "modern" view supports intervention. Nicholas J. Miller, graduate director of the Department of History at Boise State University, where he teaches courses on Central and Eastern European history, argues that it is important to see elements of both the ancient and the modern and to adjust policy accordingly. He suggests less emphasis on "demonstrations of our power and their weakness, such as the current demand for the handover of Hague indictees before progress can be made on assistance to Serbia" and more attention to "rebuilding stable economies, even in the absence of sincere political reform. ... Western policymakers need to be prepared to reject easy answers: good policy requires an understanding of the historical, political, and economic conditions on the ground."

6. Wrona, Richard M. A DANGEROUS SEPARATION: THE SCHISM BETWEEN AMERICAN SOCIETY AND ITS MILITARY (World Affairs, vol. 169, no. 1, Summer 2006, pp. 25-38)

The author, an Army officer and instructor at the United States Military Academy, advocates universal military conscription as a means to mitigate the widening culture gap between the U.S. military and American society. Wrona provides an historical overview of American attitudes toward the military as well as polling data suggesting that military personnel see themselves as increasingly isolated, conservative, and moving away from their traditional apolitical role in society. These factors, combined with the increasing use of private military firms and the tendency for elected officials to use the military as backdrops for photo-ops. The best way to manage the civil-military gap, the author argues, is to narrow it by instituting a system of universal service, which would expose a wider segment of American society to military culture, and shift attitudes away from "rights" in favor of the "responsibilities" that underpin democratic societies.

U.S. SOCIETY & VALUES

7. Hamill, Pete FIVE YEARS LATER -- MY KIND OF TOWN: NEW YORK, NEW YORK (Smithsonian Magazine, vol. 37, no. 6, September 2006, pp. 26-28)

As the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center approaches, veteran journalist Pete Hamill reports that his fellow New Yorkers have moved on. "The horror can rise again at odd moments ... and then the moment passes," he writes. In fact, he contends that in many ways the city is better than ever: the economy has recovered, people are more polite, race has become a less divisive issue, and the streets are safer. While not a perfect city -- many of the city's attractions are too expensive for ordinary citizens, for instance -- New York continues to thrive; and New Yorkers continue to exhibit the qualities that have always helped them survive: "optimism, irony, intelligence and laughter."

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No.09, September 2006

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☐ New E-Journal, September 2006 "Rebuilding and Resilience Five Years After 9/11"